

Your Honor:

I'm Lisa McMahon's older brother. She confided in me after this case began about what she'd done. She was extremely distraught, crying and terrified that she was going to lose her family, not just her husband and children but me and our mother. She was afraid we'd turn against her for what she did, and I understand why she was afraid. Our family has deep and long standing connections to law enforcement, and I know that she has to be punished for what she has done. But I also love my sister despite her mistakes, because I know that the crime she committed isn't a full reflection of her character.

Lisa is a loving mother and a genuinely good person who would have always put other people first, whether it's her children, or our mother or her friends. This is something I find remarkable because of how she grew up and the childhood she had. Our parents separated and eventually divorced when Lisa and I were children. Because from birth I had been practically a shadow to our father and constantly with him, I went to live with him from the age of 11. But to my knowledge, Lisa only saw our father once after the divorce, as an adult, a few years before he died, and even then the visit went badly because of interference from his second wife. Even though I was close to our father, I ran away from him at age 15, just before his new wife was going to send me away to military school. Lisa grew up with our mother and without any contact with our father. They had to move around a lot before our mother remarried, because as I understand it they didn't have much money.

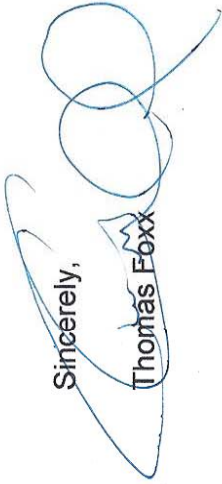
When Lisa and our mom were able to settle down, it was with my stepfather, who was an angry man. At age 15 or 16, I came to California to live with my mother, Lisa and our stepfather. He was one of those people who seemed to hate human beings equally. I work with the correctional system, and I've seen that there are some people who take that work and a certain attitude home with them. Our stepfather ran the household like a prison. It was just his overall way, harsh and emotionally abusive. I reacted to it, retaliated, and left as soon as I turned 18. Lisa was always really close to my mother, and her way of dealing was to withdraw and turtle up rather than asserting herself. She didn't make waves. Even after our stepfather found religion, as an old man with a bad heart trying to get into heaven, he never really reformed. My own daughter ran into his inflexible temper as a child. His illness brought my mom down. She was doing everything, even though she was even older than he was and had her own problems with a recurrent skin cancer. She was a full-time caregiver for him, and taking care of their home and property in the way he expected was hard, physical work. So it was completely in keeping with Lisa's nature to feel like she needed to drop everything to help our mom, even if I didn't feel like it was necessary. I was very surprised when Lisa went back to Arkansas during his illness and when she eventually moved there.

Whether it was taking care of our mother, or putting her kids through school even when she couldn't afford it, Lisa is the kind of person who doesn't say no. As we've grown up and had families of our own, we haven't remained in as close contact as we once had, so I can't speak to what was going on in her life when she started the actions that led to this case. But because I know her nature, I hope that you can understand that it could only have been a perfect storm of events that would lead her to stray from what she knows to be right. I know that she has been paying an emotional price for what she has done, and like many who care for her, I am afraid for her. When I talk to her now that she's accepted

responsibility for what she's done, I think I can hear in her voice that she takes some strength from knowing that the people she was always afraid of letting down, the people she was afraid would leave, are still standing with her. Whatever sentence you decide is just, she's earned our continued support by the way she's lived her life.

Sincerely,

Thomas Fox

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'T' and 'F' that are interconnected. The signature is written over the printed name 'Thomas Fox'.